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Culture of peace

Consolidated report containing a draft declaration and programme of action on a culture of peace

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

Note submitted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on a meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination held on 30 and 31 October 1998

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations chaired a meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), composed of the executive heads of all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as well as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, in New York on 30 and 31 October 1998.

2. The Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) informed the Committee of the culture of peace initiative that UNESCO had launched in close consultation with the Secretary-General and in cooperation with other organizations of the United Nations system. He recalled that a culture of peace consisted of a set of values, attitudes and behaviours that reflected and inspired social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, tolerance, and solidarity; that rejected violence and endeavoured to prevent conflicts by tackling their roots; that resolved problems through dialogue and negotiations; and that guaranteed to everyone the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the endogenous development of their society. In essence, the culture of peace approach endeavoured to develop a universal ethic that would inform all aspects of the work of the United Nations system.

3. The Director-General referred in particular to the draft declaration and programme of action that was before the General Assembly, informed his colleagues of activities being

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undertaken and/or envisaged by UNESCO in order to promote the culture of peace, inviting their collaboration, and stressed the importance of mobilizing the international community and Member States during the International Year for the Culture of Peace, which the General Assembly had proclaimed for the year 2000 (see Assembly resolution 52/15 of 20 November 1997).

4. The executive heads expressed their support for this initiative, and made a number of specific suggestions in relation to the relevance of this overarching concept for the coordinated follow-up to major conferences. They agreed that the concept of the culture of peace was at the heart of the work of the United Nations system, and agreed to ensure, through appropriate arrangements within the framework of ACC, the preparation of a system-wide media and public information strategy for the year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace, and the continuous exchange of information on activities to be undertaken in follow-up to the decisions that the General Assembly would take on the draft declaration and programme of action.

5. ACC also agreed that the International Year for the Culture of Peace should be launched at all United Nations system headquarters and field offices on International Day of Peace 1999.